



ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

INTERPRETING THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE GOSPELS (NTEN5351-ONL)

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Biblical Studies Division

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Spring 2023

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NOBTS MISSION STATEMENT:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course and the related course 5352, Interpreting Acts through Revelation, is to introduce students to the literature of the New Testament. Besides an overview of the history of the canonization and text of the NT, this course especially focuses on studying the content and theology of the Gospels, the historical and cultural contexts surrounding them, the hermeneutical considerations for interpreting them, and certain questions addressed by contemporary scholarship related to them.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course seeks to realize the following in student learning:

1. Students should understand thoroughly the history, background, hermeneutical considerations, text and canon history, and overall content and theology of the Gospels.
2. Students should be able to apply adequately the history, background, hermeneutical considerations, text and canon history, and overall context and theology of the Gospels to a historically-based interpretation of the text.
3. Students should be able to communicate clearly the historical context, exegetical meaning, and theological implications of the text to a contemporary audience.

COURSE TEACHING METHODS:

1. The primary method of instruction in the course will be by way of class lectures, media clips, discussions, and other resources that will be mentioned during the class.
2. Internet resources may be used or referenced, with Canvas normally being used as well for the class.
3. Written assignments and tests will be used to provide students with an opportunity to assimilate the course material, show understanding of the assigned readings/topics, and demonstrate competency in the subject matter.

EMBEDDED ASSIGNMENT (EXEGESIS PAPER):

This course will be assessed for quality and improvement through the use of an embedded assignment. The exegesis paper will serve as the basis for this assessment. Information on the exegesis paper is under the section labeled as Course Requirements.

TEXTBOOKS:

The following textbooks are required for the course:

1. The Bible (any major translation or the Greek NT for NT portions).
2. Burge, M. Gary, Lynn H. Cohick, and Gene L. Green. *The New Testament in Antiquity*. 1st ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.
3. Gordon, Fee, and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

A. Reading (10% of Final Grade)

The assigned readings must be completed. The reading and lecture videos are the core of this course; therefore, they are considered essential for the successful completion of the course. Students are expected to view all lecture videos and read all required materials for the course. Canvas keeps a record of how much of each video is viewed by each student. Discussion posts and quizzes will be drawn from the topics of the readings and lecture videos as a means of verifying that students are both completing the readings and understanding the content of the readings. At the end of each unit, students will acknowledge in Canvas the amount of reading they did.

B. Quizzes (15% of Final Grade)

There will be **weekly quizzes** related to the lecture videos and the readings. Each student is expected to take all quizzes at the scheduled times. Unless otherwise indicated, the quizzes are **closed-book/closed-note**. Unit quizzes will consist of **objective questions** (true/false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, etc.). The quizzes will be **timed** and must be completed by the due date (late quizzes will count as zeros unless permission was obtained by the professor for an extension).

C. Discussion Posts and Interpretive Assignments (25% of Final Grade)

There will be either a weekly discussion post or interpretive assignments.

Discussion Posts [DP]

There will be discussion assignments designed to facilitate a classroom discussion on a topic or question related to the course material. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions through the discussion posts. Students should submit **responses to each thread/post by Thursday at 11:59pm (CST)** of the week when the discussion post is due. Students should then **respond to at least two classmates' posts by Sunday at 11:59pm (CST)** of the week when the discussion post is due. New units will be available on Monday of each week.

Students will submit a **500-word** thread/post on the topic or question. The post should represent a thoughtful focused and informed reflection on the topic. It must include footnotes of at least two sources aside from the assigned textbooks.

Students must also read and write a reply to at least two of threads/posts of their classmates. The reply must be a minimum of **250 words**. Be kind and polite but engage their post with substantive feedback. While one does not have to disagree, the reply should offer insights, challenges, and other considerations.

Rubric: The general grading rubric to be used in evaluating the assignment performance of students in the class is outlined in the table on the next page.

Rubric for Grading Discussion Posts

Criteria	Failed to Complete Assignment (0%)	Poor (25%)	Fair (50%)	Good (75%)	Excellent (100%)
Interaction with the Prompt	Student did not complete the assignment.	Failed to address prompt.	Connection to prompt was unclear.	Clear connection to prompt, but insufficient word count (less than 500 words).	Clear connection to prompt and sufficient word count (at least 500 words).
Interactions with Peers	Student did not complete the assignment.	Failed to respond to peers.	Responses to peers offer a shallow contribution to discussion (e.g., agrees or disagrees); simply paraphrases what others have said; does not enrich discussion. Alternatively, student did not respond to two peers.	Responses to peers demonstrated an effort to contribute to discussion. One or both responses were less than the required word count (250 words).	Responses to peers demonstrated an effort to contribute to discussion and meet the required word count (250 words).
Content	Student did not complete the assignment.	Post content is superficial in thought and preparation: ideas are not developed or supported with references to readings.	Post content is developed and supported by references to course readings; however, it lacks reference to sources aside from the assigned textbooks.	Post content is developed and supported by references to course readings. In addition, it includes one reference to a source aside from the assigned textbooks.	Post content is well-developed and supported by references to course readings. In addition, it includes two references to sources aside from the assigned textbooks.
Punctuality	Student did not complete the assignment.	Interaction with the prompt is more than two days late. Responses to the discussion post are due on Thursday at 11:59pm (CST) of the week when the discussion post is due.	Interaction with the prompt is late, but it is less than two days late. Responses to the discussion post are due on Thursday at 11:59pm (CST) of the week when the discussion post is due.	Interaction with the prompt is on time; however, the interaction with peers was late. Responses to at least two classmates' posts are due on Sunday at 11:59pm (CST) of the week when the discussion post is due.	Interaction with prompt and peers were on time. Responses to at least two classmates' posts are due on Sunday at 11:59pm (CST) of the week when the discussion post is due.

Interpretive Assignments [IA]

Instead of a discussion post, students will do an interpretive assignment over three passages in the Gospels (one narrative, one parable, and one discourse/teaching). Interpretive assignments will be between **800—1000 words**. Students will post their interpretive assignment in a discussion board forum. Students should submit the interpretive assignment **by Thursday at 11:59pm (CST)** of the week when this assignment is due. In addition, students must respond/reply to at least two of their classmates post with a reply of at least **250 words**. These replies are **due on Sunday at 11:59pm (CST)** of the week when the interpretive assignment is due.

Procedure

- **Read** the NT Book Completely (in one sitting if possible)
- **Choose** a passage with based on the assigned subgenre (narrative, parable, discourse) a minimum of five verses (but may be longer).
- **Examine** the literary context (what does it say in the preceding verses/chapters and succeeding verses/chapter.
- **Identify** main characters or the author, audience, and occasion.
 - Identify topics or themes in your selected passage.
 - Identify the main idea(s) of the passage.
 - Identify any difficult concepts, words, or phrases that are hard to understand.
- **Consult** the textbooks, commentaries, and other resources.
- **Type** your interpretive assignment using Times New Roman 12 pt. font and upload or post it.

Presentation (follow this outline exactly)

1. **Introduction:** State what passage (chapter and verses) you studied. Explain why you chose them. Write a short sentence or two that summarized what you learned in them.
2. **Context**
 - **Historical Context:** Say something about the historical, social, and cultural background of your passage/book.
 - **Literary Context:** Where does your passage fit within the context of the book. What does it say before and after your passage.
3. **Content:** Main characters or author, audience, and occasion?
Topic or Theme Addressed
Main Idea(s)
Interpretive Difficulties
Summary of the Text with Interpretation from using sources.
4. **Conclusion**
Discuss the things you learned
Discuss ways you can personally apply what you learned

Rubric: The general grading rubric to be used in evaluating the assignment performance of students in the class is outlined in the table on the next page.

Rubric for Grading Interpretive Assignments

Criterion	Point Value	Points Possible	Points Given & Instructor Comments
Presentation (1-4)			
1. Introduction: student stated the passage (chapter and verses) he/she studied and also explained the reason he/she chose the particular passage. In addition, student summarized what he/she learned from the passage.	10	60	
2. Context: student provided both the Historical and Literary Contexts. *Regarding the <u>historical context</u> , student included background information (setting, authorship, audience, date and place of writing, etc.) of the biblical book containing the passage chosen for his/her exegesis paper. *Regarding the <u>literary context</u> of the passage, student discussed the <i>placement</i> of the passage in its immediate and larger contexts within the book. Student was able to explain how his/her passage fits into its context (the surrounding paragraphs and chapters).	8		
3. Content Student included the following content: 3.1. Main characters or author, audience, and occasion 3.2. Topic(s) or theme(s) in the selected passage 3.3. Main idea(s) of the passage 3.4. Interpretive difficulties (difficult concepts, words, or phrases that are hard to understand) 3.5. Summary of the text with interpretation from using resources (textbooks, commentaries, and etc.)	15		
4. Conclusion 4.1. Student discussed the things he/she learned 4.2. Student discussed ways he/she can personally apply what he/she learned	10		
Sufficient word count: Interpretive assignment should contain between 800—1000 words.	5		
Spelling & Grammar	2		
Punctuality: students must submit the interpretive assignment by Thursday at 11:59pm (CST) of the week when this assignment is due.	8		
Clear, logical flow to post, major points are stated clearly	2		
Replies			
At least 2 replies to classmates (that's 1 reply posted to each of 2 classmates' threads) expressing one element of agreement and one element of disagreement for each original posts reviewed.	12	40	
Brings clarity to issues being discussed, relating issues to Scripture/biblical principles and experience.	10		
Appropriate "netiquette" manners (e.g. no name calling or labeling another student's idea a derogatory term, such as "stupid," "dumb" even when disagreeing).	3		
Spelling & Grammar	2		
Sufficient word count (each replied contained 250 words).	5		
Punctuality: responses to at least two classmates' posts are due on Sunday at 11:59pm (CST) of the week when the interpretive assignment is due.	8		
TOTAL POINTS		100	

D. Exegesis Paper (25% of final grade)

The exegesis paper is an embedded assignment. Using the method taught in the course, the student is to write a 2000-word exegesis paper (not counting bibliography, cover page, and footnotes) demonstrating their own exegesis of a particular passage in the Gospels.

1. Students should clearly demonstrate an understanding of a sound method for exegesis
2. They are to demonstrate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
3. They are to communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.

The paper should exhibit well-structured arguments and a proficient grasp of grammar, spelling, and style. Student is to write a double-spaced paper using a twelve-point Times New Roman font for the entire paper, including notes and page numbers. Student may choose to use parenthetical citations or Turabian style footnotes in the body of the paper. However, the paper must contain a bibliography in Turabian format with a minimum of two critical sources, excluding the textbook(s). This paper must be submitted via Canvas by the due date listed on the course schedule.

Exegesis Paper Checklist

- I have double-spaced the paper with a twelve-point font and one-inch margins.
- The paper has a title page that includes the required information.
- The paper is the required length (2000-word), excluding the Title Page, Footnotes, and Bibliography.
- My introduction previews the main ideas of the passage.
- I discuss both the historical and literary contexts of the passage.
- I explain the meaning of critical words in my passage.
- I have consulted and cited the required number of reputable sources (at least two sources, excluding the textbooks).
- I discuss several applications of this passage for a contemporary audience.
- I added page numbers to the paper.
- I include a bibliography of sources cited in the paper.
- I used a twelve-point Times New Roman font for the entire paper, including notes and page numbers.
- I have proofread the paper.

Rubric: The general grading rubric to be used in evaluating the assignment performance of students in the class is outlined in the table below on the next page.

Rubric for Grading Exegesis Paper

Criterion	Point Value	Points Possible	Points Given & Instructor Comments
Presentation (1-5)			
1. Introduction: student indicated the passage chosen for the exegesis paper and explained the <i>why</i> and <i>how</i> he/she chose the specific passage for his/her exegesis analysis. In addition, student introduced the main ideas and topics included in the passage.	10	100	
2. Context: student provided both the historical and literary contexts. *Regarding the <u>historical context</u> , student included background information (setting, authorship, audience, date and place of writing, etc.) of the biblical book containing the passage chosen for his/her exegesis paper. *Regarding the <u>literary context</u> of the passage, student discussed the <i>placement</i> of the passage in its immediate and larger contexts within the book. Student was able to explain how his/her passage fits into its context (the surrounding paragraphs and chapters).	14		
3. Overview: student included a brief overview of the passage highlighting key elements within the passages. Student also indicated the passage's main idea, major theologies, and interpretive concerns. Moreover, student communicated how the passage impacts the faith and life of the contemporary church.	10		
4. Argument: student demonstrated critical engagement with the content of the passage and made clear and well-structured arguments. <u>Note:</u> for passages that have debatable, controversial, or multiple interpretations, student should include the different options for interpretations. Student should also state the interpretation he/she thinks is the best along with the reasons for his/her choice.	15		
5. Conclusion: student tied the whole passage together in a concise conclusion, well-written conclusion.	10		
Sufficient word count: the exegesis paper should contain no less than 2000 words.	8		
Spelling & Grammar	5		
The paper contained a bibliography in Turabian format with a minimum of two critical sources, excluding the textbook(s).	10		
Clear, logical flow to paper, major points of passage were addressed.	8		
Punctuality: student submitted the exegesis paper by Apr 30, 2023 at 11:59pm (CST).	10		
TOTAL POINTS	100		

E. Exams (25% of final grade)

There are two sectional exams:

1. Sectional Exam #1: Background and Hermeneutics
2. Sectional Exam #2 (Final): Gospel Genre, Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John

COURSE EVALUATION:

Reading: 10%
 Quizzes: 15%
 DP & IA: 25%
 Exegesis Paper: 25%
 Sectional Exams: 25%

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/- Email for general technical questions/support requests.

2. Selfserve@nobts.edu- Email technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu or My.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, Faculty portal, etc.)
3. Canvas@nobts.edu Click on the “Help” button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to Canvas.nobts.edu / nobts.instructure.com.
4. Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu - Email technical questions/support requests with Bluejeans and NOBTS Bluejeans classrooms (On and Off-Campus).
5. TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu- Email technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Nextiva Phone system.
6. [504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon-Thurs 7:00am-9:00pm & Fri 7:00-7:00pm Central Time).

WRITING STYLE GUIDE:

Writing assignments should follow the **NOBTS/Leavell College Manual of Form and Style** (*revised August 2019*). To access this manual on the seminary website, please use the following link: <https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>.

HELP FOR WRITING PAPERS AT “THE NOBTS WRITING CENTER”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to become better writers. Please contact them to secure help with writing. <http://nobts.edu/writing>

POLICY ON LATE SUBMISSIONS:

An automatic 10-point deduction will be taken for work submitted after the due date. Additional points will be deducted based on the number of days the submission is late.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format.

The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing discussion posts, or any other course requirement.

Be aware that lack of academic integrity will have consequences on your success in this course. You will receive an automatic F if you are caught committing any of the following infractions:

1. Cheating – intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

2. Fabrication – intentional and unauthorized invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. Plagiarism – intentionally representing the words, images, or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise.
4. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty – intentionally helping or attempting to help another commit act of academic dishonesty.

POLICY FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS:

Graduating students are responsible for alerting the professor of their intention to graduate. Therefore, if you are planning to graduate this semester, please inform your professor via email as soon as possible. Please note that all of your assignments must be completed by noon (12PM) on the Wednesday prior to commencement exercises.

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

www.Denverseminary.edu has an updated OT & NT bibliography on the Library section of their website.

www.bestcommentaries.com is another great website for finding commentaries.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Unit	Topic	Reading	Assignments	Due Date
Unit 1 Jan. 17-22	1. Introduction to the course, The Text of the NT & Inspiration 2. The Text of the NT, The Development of the NT Canon	B Ch 27	Discussion Post [DP] Quiz Reading Report	DP Response to DP – Thurs. (Jan 19) by 11:59pm Responses to at least 2 classmates’ posts – Sun. (Jan 22) by 11:59pm Quiz: Sun. (Jan 22) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Jan 22) by 11:59pm
Unit 2 Jan. 23-29	1. The NT World: Jewish Backgrounds (2 nd Temple Period) 2. The NT World: Jewish Background (1 st Cent. Judaism)	B Chs 2 & 3	Quiz Reading Report	Quiz: Sun. (Jan 29) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Jan 29) by 11:59pm
Unit 3 Jan 30-Feb 5	The NT World: The Greco-Roman Backgrounds	B Ch 5	DP Quiz Reading Report	DP Response to DP – Thurs. (Feb 2) by 11:59pm Responses to at least 2 classmates’ posts – Sun. (Feb 5) by 11:59pm Quiz: Sun. (Feb 5) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Feb 5) by 11:59pm
Unit 4 Feb 6-12	Interpreting the Bible: Hermeneutics—History & Methods	F&S Ch 1	Quiz Reading Report	Quiz: Sun. (Feb 12) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Feb 12) by 11:59pm
Unit 5 Feb 13-19	Interpreting the Bible: Hermeneutical Considerations	F&S Ch 2	Sectional Exam #1: Background and Hermeneutics Reading Report No quiz this week	Sectional Exam #1: Sun. (Feb 19) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Feb 19) by 11:59pm

Unit 6 Feb 20-26	1. Gospel Genre 2. Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels and the Life of Christ	F&S Ch 7 B Ch 7, F&S Ch 8	DP Quiz Reading Report	DP Response to DP – Thurs. (Feb 23) by 11:59pm Responses to at least 2 classmates' posts – Sun. (Feb 26) by 11:59pm Quiz: Sun. (Feb 26) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Feb 26) by 11:59pm
Unit 7 Feb 27-Mar 5	1. Introduction to the Gospel of Mark 2. Key Passages in Mark	B Ch 9 Mark 1-8	Quiz Reading Report	Quiz: Sun. (Mar 5) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Mar 5) by 11:59pm
Unit 8 Mar 6-12	1. Key Passages in Mark (continued) 2. Theological Teachings in Mark	Mark 9-16	Interpretive Assignment [IA]: Narrative No quiz this week Reading Report	IA: Thurs. (Mar 9) by 11:59pm Responses to at least 2 classmates' posts – Sun. (Mar 12) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Mar 12) by 11:59pm
Spring Break Mar 13-19	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Unit 9 Mar 20-26	1. Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew 2. Key Passage in Matthew	B Ch.8 Matthew 1-14	Quiz Reading Report	Quiz: Sun. (Mar 26) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Mar 26) by 11:59pm
Unit 10 Mar 27-Apr 2	1. Key Passages in Matthew (continued) 2. Theological Teachings in Matthew	Matthew 15-28	IA: Discourse Reading Report No quiz this week	IA: Thurs. (Mar 30) by 11:59pm Responses to at least 2 classmates' posts – Sun. (Apr 2) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Apr 2) by 11:59pm
Unit 11 Apr 3-9	1. Introduction to the Gospel of Luke 2. Interpreting Parables	B Ch 10 Luke 1-12	Reading Report Quiz	Quiz: Sun. (Apr 9) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Apr 9) by 11:59pm
Unit 12 Apr 10-16	1. Key Passages in Luke 2. Theological Teachings in Luke	Luke 13-24	IA: Parable Reading Report No quiz this week	IA: Thurs. (Apr 13) by 11:59pm Responses to at least 2 classmates' posts – Sun. (Apr 16) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Apr 16) by 11:59pm
Unit 13 Apr 17-23	1. Introduction to the Gospel of John 2. Key Passages in John	B Ch.11 John 1-10	Quiz Reading Report	Quiz: Sun. (Apr 23) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Apr 23) by 11:59pm
Unit 14 Apr 24-30	Key Passages and Theological Teachings in John	John 11-21	Exegesis Paper Reading Report No quiz this week	Exegesis Paper: Sun. (Apr 30) by 11:59pm Reading Report: Sun. (Apr 30) by 11:59pm
Unit 15 May 1-2	Sectional Exam #2 (Final Exam): Gospel Genre, Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John			Final Sectional Exam: Tuesday (May 2) by 11:59pm